

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1596

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to recognize Bob Thomas on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should specially recognize, particularly on the occasion of their retirement, those outstanding school administrators who have devoted their careers to providing the highest-quality education for Tennessee's students; and

WHEREAS, one such outstanding individual is Bob Thomas, who has served as the superintendent of Knox County Schools since his unanimous confirmation by the Knox County Board of Education in March 2017; he will take his well-deserved retirement in June 2022; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas has focused on three priorities as superintendent: enhancing student achievement, creating a positive culture, and eliminating disparities; those priorities became the foundation of a new five-year strategic plan that was adopted by the Board of Education in 2019; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UT), Bob Thomas holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and a Master of Science degree in Education, and he completed extensive coursework beyond his master's degree in educational administration and supervision at UT; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas has devoted his entire professional career in service to education in Knox County, beginning in 1973 as a teacher at Bearden Junior High School; and

WHEREAS, during Bob Thomas's tenure as superintendent, Knox County Schools has implemented multiple salary increases for teachers, completed construction of Gibbs Middle School and Hardin Valley Middle School, and implemented a 1:1 initiative that provided a laptop computer to every K-12 student; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas navigated complex issues related to COVID-19, as Tennessee schools cut short the 2019-2020 academic year. Superintendent Thomas and Knox County

Schools developed a detailed reopening plan for 2020-2021, including extensive health and safety protocols for in-person students and a new online learning program for virtual students; the district reopened in August 2020 and offered the option of in-person instruction or virtual instruction for the entire academic year; and

WHEREAS, his many professional accomplishments aside, Bob Thomas is most grateful for the love and companionship he shares with his wife, Beckye, who is a teacher at Central High School; he is the proud father of a son, Brandon, and his wife, Annalise; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Mr. Thomas has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of the students, parents, teachers, and school board members of Knox County Schools alike; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we extend to Bob Thomas our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement, applaud his dedication to the youth of Tennessee, and wish him much happiness and every continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.